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THE

EMERALD,

(NEW ESTABLISHMENT)

OR

MISCELLANY OF LITERATURE;

CONTAINING

44

SKETCHES OF THE

MANNERS, MORALS, AND AMUSEMENTS OF THE AGE.

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At the conclusion of each month will be found a list of marriages and deaths.

PROSPECTUS

OF

THE EMERALD.

(NEW ESTABLISHMENT.)

TO BE PUBLISHED BY OLIVER C. GREENLEAF, PROPRIETOR,

No. 3, Court Street, Boston.

THE title to address the public, when a periodical work is first offered for patronage, has received the security of prescription. The fact has so often been repeated, that custom has established its propriety; and a deviation from general usage would, at this day, be a breach of decorum, since the world now demands as a right, what formerly it granted as a courtesy. It seems required, therefore, of every candidate, that he should publicly state his pretensions to favour, and claims for support; and it is fortunate that most candidates have felt it incumbent to answer the requisition. If then, at the outset of a publication, before any absolute obligation on either part can exist, such is the duty of editors, the necessity of an address on the present occasion is so much the stronger, as the paper now undertaken is already in extensive circulation. The Editors are not only to fulfil duties to old, but to solicit the favour of new patrons; they are to request the aid of additional contributions, as well as preserve the assistance of previous contributors; to ask the continuance of present support, and desire the countenance of more extended influence; to claim encouragement from genius, help from learning, regard from talents, kindness from friendship, and maintenance from riches; and are tempted to raise the expectation, not without anxiety, yet not with despair, that their merits shall deserve what liberality may bestow. If their confidence be extreme, it is proportioned to their hopes of success, arising from promises gratuitously granted, and from kindnesses generously conferred. But it is the fate of human nature to suffer disappointment; and they probably shall not be exempted from the general liability. Even now they may place too much reliance on the endeavours of others, and may make a false estimate of the value of their own. Such considerations should be productive of caution in promises, and of zeal in performance; for the world is better pleased with what is unlooked for than with what is generally expected, and their own satisfaction will be more unalloyed the nearer they may attain the anticipated excellence.

One of the principal objects in a literary journal is to afford amusement and instruction to every class of readers. But so small a paper as "*The Emerald*," must necessarily be defective in discussions of a scientific nature, since one able essay on any branch of abstruse inves-

tigation would monopolize its pages. The amusement to be found in the Emerald must evidently consist in more miscellaneous literature, and be attained by more agreeable excursions than travelling through the intricacies of a folio; and the instruction to be derived will be of easier acquisition, than to dive into the depths of abstraction or wander in the gloom of metaphysics. While *variety of subject* will be our sedulous endeavour, we shall always sacrifice that to elegance of expression, chastity of thought, and value of information. Though we shall touch, like the bee, upon every plant in the garden of literature, we shall only extract from those which produce sweets and diffuse fragrance. "*The Emerald*" will contain many things common to other publications, and some peculiar to itself. In this place we have now no convenient medium to convey to the world such happy effusions of fancy, as almost every author has at some time or other committed to writing; and the pages of the Emerald being singularly calculated as a depository for such efforts of the imagination, will have a department open to receive them. As the editors of this work will be obliged to seek for productions in the lighter and more elegant branches of literature, it is probable that gems will not be found in inexhaustible profusion; the pages of their paper cannot glitter with unintermitted splendour, nor fail sometimes to "pale" their "ineffectual fire." This however is to be attributed not to want of zeal; but to want of matter. It is infinitely easier to collect in the lumber of learning materials for an elaborate argument, than to discover in the cabinet of Belles-lettres a curiosity elegantly appropriate. It is supposed to be an easy duty to edite a publication of the nature we propose; nothing is wanting, it is imagined, but an old essay or two, a few anecdotes of distinguished men collected from ancient magazines, some accidental extracts from an antiquated author, a parcel of poetry from any popular work, and you have your paper ready furnished for publication. But to conduct such a design respectably is not an inferior task; to conduct it with but little assistance, is a work of much labour and exercise of invention. The public taste is so often to be consulted; there is so much work in retrenchment, improvement, and research; now an obstinate idea is to be made flexible, then a whimsical conceit is to be told with effect; the quintessence of one book is sometimes to be extracted, and the details of another to be written in different language; rival authors are to be reconciled, and the imagination to be ever on the wing, seeking ideas in regions of invention, that this *easy* task, becomes so difficult of execution, that few would wish to undertake it.

Our expectation of support warrants us to offer in anticipation the probable complexion of our paper, for the consideration of the public. We have already mentioned, in general terms, the nature of our design; we wish now to shew our intentions in detail.

The essays which have appeared under the title of the "Wanderer," are still to be continued. They are various in their structure; sometimes they are critical, sometimes argumentative, and sometimes hu-

morous; but always are intended to detect errour, to assail vice, to embolden virtue, and confirm truth. The gravity of these papers gives weight to the sentiments they contain, while their intrinsic merit recompenses the labour of perusal.

We consider the DRAMA, a subject of such public attention, that the effects it may produce upon society must be generally extensive. Now, whether the stage under proper regulations might become a school of morality, it is here equally difficult to decide and useless to enquire; but as it has become a public amusement of primary importance, there can be no doubt that much advantage will accrue, from checking its absurdity and rewarding its merit. The actors will be benefited and the public entertained by both the one and the other. We intend therefore to give a faithful report of all the theatrical intelligence that it may be important to know or interesting to communicate: and when we shall feel it necessary to correct the players, we hope it will be done without bitterness of asperity, we are sure it shall be without *wantonness of insult*.

Another subject of important consideration will be *Satire*, either in poetry or prose. Folly and dissipation, ridiculous whims, national absurdities and extravagancies, can only be effectually controuled by the thong of satire. Pope says, "to attack vices in the abstract, without touching persons, may be safe fighting indeed, but it is fighting with shadows." We shall therefore be solicitous to quarrel with *substances*; to devote a department entirely to the overthrow of absurdity by the force of ridicule. We entertain sanguine expectations of the value of this branch of our paper, from the hopes of much extraneous assistance, founded upon strong probabilities; we may be deceived in them; but are certain of many valuable contributions from our own circle.

Of all the amusements of literature, perhaps the study of *Biography* is the most entertaining and instructive. We shall not be wanting in industry to obtain sketches of men whose reputation is not generally spread, to compile the lives of famous characters, and particularly to direct our attention to anecdotes of distinguished personages in our own country, who, having done it honour, now lie in their tombs, neglected. This remark leads us to an observation on another point of American literature. There are in the possession of some persons of curiosity and research, some valuable *Essays*, written in former times in this country; from which we propose to select the best, and publish them occasionally for the pleasure of our readers. They will evince the state of learning in America a century ago, and perhaps induce some gentleman of enterprise to trace our progress in literature from that period until now. We cannot dismiss the subject without requesting the perusal of such valuable pamphlets, and other productions, as were considered meritorious at the time they were written, but which have now sunk into the tomb of forgetfulness.

Under the head of "*The Medley*," we shall offer such extracts from works of popular interest as we think may be judicious and entertaining; besides a general selection of rare anecdotes, points of wit,

brilliant repartee, and remarkable examples of style. Our purpose will be to render this department lively without licentiousness, brilliant without tinsel, and elegant without elaboration.

There is another branch of a paper of this kind, which ought to claim peculiar attention. The account of important modern transactions in literature or science, and in general all curious information and novelty, relating to those subjects. We shall be able to supply the earliest information on such topics; which are always interesting, useful, and instructive. Our *Miscellaneous Intelligence*, will therefore contain, arranged in convenient order, all the valuable novelty that can be comprised in so small a space as we can assign to it.

We shall also give a *Monthly List of Deaths and Marriages*, after the example of the English magazines, which, as we intend the work to be particularly adapted to families, will be found advantageous from its form, for a register of such events.

We come now to the end of our general arrangement, and hope our *Poetry* will not disgrace, but rather add value to our paper. America indeed is not the region of the Muses. We call for assistance in this department, but we fear not from the voice of inspiration. We venture to hope, however, that the perusal of our selected poetry will excite emulation; and that the fire of genius, which transfuses itself in every nation, may light the dormant spirit of our sons of song, and kindle it into flame.

The fallacy of human expectation is well exemplified in the estimate which authors make of their labours to mankind: and while we suppose we partake of the universal folly, we are inclined to imagine we have undertaken the *Emerald* at a peculiarly propitious conjuncture. There now exists no literary paper but the *Anthology*, in this place, and the gravity of its pages, would claim little that could be suitable to those of the Emerald. We think the town wants to be weeded of overgrown absurdity and folly and extravagance. We presume that every family will esteem a paper, devoted to early, literary, and general information, to lively wit, to pungency of satire, to correct and animated morality, and to a judicious estimate of the Dramatical performances of the day. With such ideas, we issue this Prospectus of the work, and as we cannot doubt the public would receive with encouragement a well conducted paper of the design we have proposed, so we cannot but declare, that the *Emerald* shall certainly be entitled to the unequivocal praise of avoiding the indelicacy, discountenancing the vice, deriding the folly, and assailing the corruption of the times.

CONDITIONS.

1. This work will be handsomely printed, on a fine paper and with a good type.——2. A number will be regularly published every Saturday.——3. Each number will contain twelve pages Octavo, and be delivered, exclusive of Postage, at Four Dollars per annum, payable one half in advance.——4. No subscriptions will be received for less than six months.